30th July 1962] [Mr. Chairman]

him for the recommendation of the Council and certifying that the Bills are Money Bills within the meaning of Article 199 of the Constitution of India :—

(1) The Madras Appropriation Bill, 1962 (L.A. Bill No. 14 of 1962).

(2) The Madras General Sales-Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1962 (L.A. Bill No. 6 of 1962).

(3) The Madras Agricultural Income-tax (Amendment) Bill, 1962 (L.A. Bill No. 7 of 1962).

I have also received a message from the Hon. Speaker, Madras Legislative Assembly, transmitting a copy of the Madras City Municipal Corporation and District Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 1962 (L.A. Bill No. 11 of 1962), as passed by the Assembly, for the concurrence of the Council.

IV.—CALLING ATTENTION TO FAILURE TO POST DOCTORS TO FOUR PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRES IN THE SOUTH ARCOT DISTRICT.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Sir, with your permission, under rule 42 (1) of the Madras Legislative Council Rules, I wish to call the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Health to a matter of urgent public importance namely, the failure of Government to post doctors to four primary health centres at Marungur, Valathy, Kachirapalayam and Elavanasur in South Arot District These primary health centres were constructed at huge cost and opened with all the necessary equipment. These primary health centres were opened with a view to affording medical aid to the rural population. Large sums of money have been spent on building and equipment, and the people of that locality look forward to free medical aid. Though a year has elapsed, no doctors have been posted so far. Consequently, the local people are denied medical aid and have to go to long distances for the same. It is, therefore, necessary that immediate action should be taken to post doctors to these primary health centres.

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the four primary health centres referred to by the hon. Member are those at Marungur, Valathy, Kachirapalayam and Elavanasur in South Arcot district. I must mention in the first instance that there is a shortage of medical officers in the cadre of Assistant Surgeons in the State, and it is found difficult to fill up all the sanctioned posts. At present, about 85 posts of Assistant Surgeons in the various Government medical institutions in the State are lying vacant for want of officers. The position in respect of the four primary health centres is—

Primary Health Centre, Marungur.—The Assistant Surgeon who was working in the Primary Health Centre, Marungur, from 13th May 1961 left the station suddenly on 9th December 1961 without any intimation, deserting his post. A telegram was sent later to his address and in response to that, he agreed to join duty on 9th January 1962. But he did not, however, join duty at Marungur. Disciplinary action was thereupon instituted against

him for having deserted the post and it is pending. Due to dearth of officers a substitute could not be posted immediately. A limited number of candidates who completed their house-surgeoncy became available for appointment in March 1962 and a substitute was posted. He neither joined duty nor sent a reply. Before his temporary appointment and posting could be cancelled, a notice had to be issued to him, following the usual practice. This was done and as he did not join duty even after that notice, his appointment and posting were cancelled on 25th June 1962. No substitute could be posted till now for want of officers. However, the District Medical Officer, South Arcot, has placed the Medical Officer, Government Hospital, Panruti, to be in additional charge of the primary health centre, Marungur, pending other arrangements. He has been asked to visit the primary health centre, thrice a week.

Primary Health Centre, Valathy.—A retired and re-employed officer was working as Assistant Surgeon in this centre from 29th October 1959. He attained the age of 60 on 14th May 1962. As the practice was to re-employ superannuated medical officers only up to the age of 60, he was relieved of his duties on 25th May 1962. A substitute has not been posted yet in view of the difficulty already explained. A Junior Assistant Surgeon has been posted to the Government Headquarters Hospital, Cuddalore, so as to enable the District Medical Officer to post an M.B.B.S. doctor from the Headquarters Hospital to the Primary Health Centre. He will be joining duty shortly. Meanwhile, the Assistant Surgeon, Primary Health Centre, Sathyamangalam, is attending the Primary Health Centre, Valathy, thrice a week, in addition to his duties.

Primary Health Centre, Kachirapalayam.—The Assistant Surgeon who was working in this centre from 1st May 1959 was a re-employed officer. He exceeded the prescribed age limit of 60 years and was, therefore, relieved on 14th June 1962. The Junior Assistant Surgeon, Government Hospital, Tirukoilur, has been instructed to visit the Primary Health Centre three times a week. Steps are also being taken to post a substitute. An Assistant Surgeon from the Government Headquarters Hospital will be joining the Primary Health Centre shortly.

Primary Health Centre, Elavanasur.—The Assistant Surgeon working in this centre proceeded on leave in March last and then extended his leave. He was subsequently posted to a teaching post in view of his post-graduate degree qualification. The substitute posted in his place joined duty on 23rd April 1962. He was later selected for undergoing the M.S. (General Surgery) course and was relieved on 2nd July 1962. The Medical Officer, Government Hospital, Ulundurpet, has been placed in additional charge of this centre, pending the posting of a substitute. Steps are being taken to post a substitute soon.